

A POSTHUMOUS TRIBUTE TO  
ERNESTINE THOMAS MORRISON

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 5, 2006*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mrs. Ernestine Thomas Morrison. Mrs. Morrison was a distinguished member of the Brooklyn, New York community. It behooves us to pay tribute posthumously to this outstanding leader and I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing her impressive accomplishments.

Ernestine Thomas Morrison was born on June 8, 1935 in Birmingham, Alabama to Virginia Kirkland Allen Thomas and Ernest Thomas. During her early childhood years, she lived in Birmingham and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania after the death of her father, who passed away when she was just 2 years-old. At age 12, her mother passed on and Ernestine went to live in Brooklyn, NY with her sister and brother-in-law, Cleopatra Allen Riley and Clifford Riley. Although her sister was just 22 years-old, Ernestine recognized her not only as her sister, but as a mother. Ernestine attended P.S. 41 and graduated from the old Girls High School in Brooklyn. She married the late Roscoe Morrison, a Korean War veteran and later they had three children, Ruth, Lavinia and Charles.

Mrs. Morrison more than loved her children; she doted over them, as they were her life. While they were in elementary school, she worked part-time in the schools that they attended to be certain that her children had the best teachers and received the best services that the schools had to offer. All who knew her, knew that her love for children went beyond her own children, as she adopted her friends' children, her children's friends, her clients, her clients' kids etc., and she had the pictures to prove it.

She was elected president of the Parent Teachers Association at P.S. 243 and JHS 210; and in those roles she served as a member of the local school board for Districts 16 and 17. Additionally, she managed a summer recreation program for the youth of Albany Houses, which included several athletic teams that competed against other teams from the housing developments around New York City. Mrs. Morrison coached the Albany Houses Girls' Volleyball Team and as a first-time coach, her beloved team brought home the city championship trophy.

Mrs. Morrison was a strong voice for African-American studies in schools and open enrollment. She compelled the principal of her children's elementary school to not only order more black history books, but to allow the children to borrow those books that were already in the library. She worked with Reverend Milton A. Galamison on open enrollment for New York City public schools, a tumultuous issue of that time. Mrs. Morrison's activism in the NYC school system presented her with the opportunity to meet on several occasions with the late Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller. Open enrollment in New York City went from a concept to a reality and children all over the city were now able to attend schools outside of their neighborhoods. It was no surprise that Mrs. Morrison's activism led her to politics. She was a very active member of Unity Democratic

Club. She worked on the campaigns of the then Assemblywoman Shirley Chisholm, who later became the first African-American woman elected to the U.S. Congress. Other elected officials she worked with included the late Assemblyman Thomas R. Fortune; District Leader Narcissus Frett; Judges Thomas R. Jones, James Shaw and James Hutchinson; Assemblyman Edward Griffith and Congressman EDOLPHUS "ED" TOWNS.

She was also a member of Community Planning Board 5, which covers East New York, Spring Creek and Cypress Hills.

As her children grew older, she started a career in social work with the New York City Human Resources Administration. After her retirement in 1992, she went back to live in her birth home of Birmingham, Alabama, the place that she loved so dearly and longed to go back to. After being away for 50 years, Mrs. Morrison was in for a rude awakening. She was a New Yorker, no longer a Southerner and she didn't quite fit into the Southern lifestyle. Consequently, in 1999, she returned home to Brooklyn.

On Friday, August 22, 2003, God called home one of his best soldiers.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is incumbent on this body to recognize the accomplishments of Mrs. Ernestine Thomas Morrison as she spent many years offering her love, talents and services for the betterment of our local and national communities.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Ernestine Thomas Morrison's selfless service continuously demonstrated a level of altruistic dedication that makes her most worthy of our recognition today.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO LARRY  
WILLIAMS

**HON. JON C. PORTER**

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 5, 2006*

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments and service contributions of Larry Williams, Veterans Services Coordinator for U.S. VETS—Las Vegas.

Mr. Williams has risen above the challenges of life and has triumphed over adversity to become a leader in the ranks of the U.S. VETS and as a 2005 AmeriCorps alum. AmeriCorps is the only national service collaboration serving homeless veterans. Before his service with AmeriCorps, Larry was a recipient of their charity. On July 29, 2003, an AmeriCorps member reached out to him, providing guidance and service. Larry attributes this simple act of compassion from Ron Bass as his turning point from hopelessness to a renewed life and future.

Just 3 months later, in October 2003, Larry was able to begin his journey of recovery upon entering the U.S. VETS—Los Angeles program. It was here over a 10-month period that he started to regain his independence and embark upon his own service within the Compensated Work Therapy Program. During this time he began to dream of helping other people in the way he had been helped by becoming an AmeriCorps member himself. Within a year, after being reunited with his wife and children in Las Vegas, Nevada, that dream of helping others came true.

Larry's service in AmeriCorps Outreach allowed him to meet with homeless veterans and non-veterans alike on the streets of Las Vegas, in shelters and in desert camps. It is estimated by the Veterans Administration that there are 4,300 homeless veterans in Las Vegas alone. With one in every three adult homeless males being classified as a military veteran, Larry's personal journey has made the time and attention he renders a priceless contribution in helping to alleviate these unfortunate statistics. As Veterans Service Coordinator for U.S. VETS in Las Vegas, he provides clinical support services to approximately 450 veterans in a given year while also providing the support needed to help them plan for successful and stable living. Larry also provides residential and moral support for formerly homeless Veterans living at U.S. VETS.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to honor Larry Williams for his shining example of hope and service. He truly is a success story that deserves to be told. I applaud his service and dedication and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING RETIRING SUISUN  
CITY MAYOR JIM SPERING

**HON. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 5, 2006*

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Suisun City mayor, Jim Spering, who after serving 20 years as the mayor of Suisun City will be stepping down to assume his newly elected position as the Solano County supervisor for District Three in January.

Under the leadership of Jim Spering, the city of Suisun constructed a new city hall on the waterfront, symbolizing Suisun City's transformation from what the San Francisco Chronicle rated as "the worst city to live in" to what is now considered a jewel on the water. City hall, which for many years was located in a trailer, was "the only city hall in California that was registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles." The city now contains some of the best public spaces in the county, has a vibrant downtown, the quality of housing has improved tremendously, and the city's crime rate has dropped dramatically.

Similar to Billy Beane, the general manager of his favorite team, the Oakland Athletics, Jim has been creative in finding innovative solutions during times of fiscal stress.

In addition to his leadership position on the Suisun City council, Jim Spering has assumed a leadership role on regional transportation issues. This has earned him the reputation as Solano County's "go to guy" on transportation matters. Jim Spering has been past chairman of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for the 9-county San Francisco Bay area region and is currently on the board. At the MTC, Jim helped found the Transportation for Livable Communities Program which provides incentives for pedestrian and transit-oriented developments that strengthen the link between transportation, land use and community goals.

Jim Spering has also represented Suisun City or Solano County on several boards and commissions including the City Housing Authority, the Solano Transportation Authority,